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Bard

ORCHID

Hot pink of a spanked tush
on porn pages glimpsed
by middle-aged now Mister
Eros. For everything grows old.
And if I brought this flower home
a day would kill it, or an hour,
Time's red thumb squeezes
gently but before you know it
the petals are confetti and all
that's left's a loopy framework
dry and brittle, not unattractive
in its spooky Gothic ruin way
but where did the pink news go
that drove the man and flower so?

26 February 2012

(for ORESTES)

EL:

It was a leper
coming down the road,
I didn't think he'd dare
approach the tomb
but he did. He stank.
His straight black Asian
hair lank on his face
all pus and blankness,
boiled eyes in the ruin
of his face, his face
just looked at me
and a voice inside it said
I am your brother
who is dead. And me
I must have fainted,
slumped down on father's tomb
he didn't dare reach out
to steady me or break my fall,
but the boy with him did,
a clean boy, how could he stand
being with such a comrade
if that's what he was. I pulled
myself together, asked the leper
what it was he said. He said

I used to be your brother
and started crying
and suddenly I was crying too
that's how I knew
it was true. I sent away
my troupe of mourners
and sat down with him
with what I judged a safe
distance between us—
but what is space, the body
can read body from afar.
I listened to the air between us.

OR:

They sent me to my uncle's town
you know that part of my story
and I was glad enough of the company
I found there. That's where I met
this Pylades, my dear cousin here.
We grew together and love each other still.
Without him I would not be.
So there I was, a boy and growing older,
but in every game I played,
every race I ran, every girl
or boy I laid hot hands on,
I kept hearing the same law
droning in my head, a flock

of priests and lawyers talking
using my own breath, talking,
barking vengeance, vengeance
on those who killed your father.
But I will never kill my mother.

26 February 2012

TOY STORE

In the toy shop or the toys section of the big store age doesn't have to matter. It's all packaging and bright colors, mostly the primaries, plus the new American primary color, camouflage. It's all boxed and plastic shells, transparent as packaged air. What's inside is hardly different from what wraps it—same stuff, same painful feel in the fingers. Toys are made to hurt, A toy is the image of itself, but just the image, Cars you can't get inside, cars that don't go, dolls that don't breathe, A country of dead things in bright colors—fraudulent gifts we teach the young to want, then appease, so easy, their forged desires. Go meditate an hour in these aisles. Trickster government, shyster culture—even the balls they give boys to play withm the balls aren't even round.

26 February 2012

= = = = =

Morning coalition settling in
birds embedded in the freaks of light
gem chips in deep wood. A noise
and then another teach me harmony,
or try to. Gesualdo, mind uncomfortable
as with shimmering repetitions too,
dementia on the warpath. "Believe"
this bird. The frenzied finches
of noontime, the crow of always.
And last night cold as it was the first
owl. That's all the names I know.
Sometimes I think that to say you
is the same as saying everybody's name.

27 February 2012

= = = = =

I think about it often
to keep it from happening.
Whatever it is.

To measure empathy
is drinking from cupped palms.
Most of it dribbles through

what's left a little loves you.

27 February 2012

MISSA SOLEMNIS

The whole liturgy
—work of the people—
subsumed into one
ecstasy of violin
only one in a million
people could play.
Men become angels,
angels gods, gods
become the mind.
Only this one.
I must become you.

27 February 2012

= = = = =

Never till the rememberer
answers back
the insolence of time
that shaggy dragon

snow on the mountains
heartbreak heaven
we have turned down

too many yhings to say
entire me trillion
is just the other side of town

a letter crossed out is just as beautiful.

27 February 2012

TAKE-OUT

Carry the food home
a flower somewhere else
empty room a smell of roses
you have your whole life
right now.

27 February 2012

= = = = =

A hint of something
that almost got here
almost got said.

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The Cloud Mother

watching her pass over
quick from the west—

news from the window,
my other mind.

27 February 2012

= = = = =

The tower on the hill.

Nil. Sunrise.

The world praying

to itself. All one

same mind.

28 February 2012

= = = = =

This is local fact.
Silo. Not so many
anymore. Handful
of wheat, pocket
full of corn. Seeds
need us. Bananas
are the genus *Musa*,
muse. Can't propagate
themselves. Need us.
To spread the word.

28 February 2012

= = = = =

Something talking
here that is not
me. Bright morning
specter, speaks.

28 February 2012

= = = = =

It was standing on the station
and the river went by. Amazon
from which the future flows.
Ready soon the raft of us.

The insistent nakedness
of water. Trickery of light.
Fate is simple, logs laced
together. Rope chafe
oil heals our hands. Oil
of sugar ebriates our clumsy
sleep. Wake up, river.
Wave up, brown becoming.

Suppose together, suppose
a palm grown up in front of us
a cave mouth open ever in.
Color of roses the light within.
To go us in, is river. What
light actually does: unnames
me you so celebration.

You perch on my hand
like some kind of bird. River
means what no one can

ever tell. One look was enough.

It was another river

always but you held the

whole of it firm in your arms.

28 February 2012

= = = = =

Hoofprints on heart
you come to animal
to be born some more

cars know nothing of speed
speed is another being's body
wind torn, shadows
broken by its go.

I hide what I mean
until I know it
then you can ride it
it's all meadow around

nothing harder than
say now, frayed rope
rips, a little yellow
something slips out

It's not wise to believe me
i mean something else
all the time, a horse
you have to carry.

28 February 2012

SNOW DAY

Be as long as love needs
sequins in the air
a code for virgins
new-minted masks
from ancient Samothrace

*

no one knows all the names
not many children know their own
or why, listen to me for once
put on your mask
a different face will see a different world.

29 February 2012

= = = = =

All we know of education
is yellow buses,
fuses snapping in their underwear

a feast of fasting
colors fading from the day towards snow

things ache also animal
logical truanacies
my bones so broken

the reproaches are our liturgy—
who are the people
speaking so fondly in the cellar?

29 February 2012

SAUGERTIES

Is it comfort or survival
a truck or a canoe?
We watched a solitary kayak
flutter upstream, a little
later came down to river,
one little hull among
the loons and mallards
easily disturbed. What kind
of animal paddles all alone?

29 February 2012

= = = = =

As if it could be
And long enough the other
Dwells dwells in singleness
Midchannel of the Ister
Remorseless east
From smallest arisings this
One vast last occasion
Falls—etymology of water

The unknown element
That crouches lodges in
The heart cave that busy place
All shunting and repair
The new is never

Never new enough
O we went riding
Over the other river
North against its go
To find a steeple carved
Out of sunlight
And all the grace of God
A yellow wall.

= = = = =

When tenderly by beast renewed
Your white and brown horses
Sculpted into word but yesterday
A horse of no color at all
I sent to a loving friend for
Her to ride because she lives so long
Far from the hoofbeats of
But in Vienna Sunday mornings easy
Around and round Sankt Georg's dome
The coacher's horses trot and whinny
Seldom but when they do no bell
Gonged for God can reach so high
Or pierce the sleeper's footloose dreams
And rouse the sun's hard hoof to stomp.

29 February 2012, Hopson

= = = = =

Sailboat coming
straight down the sky

you'll never know
why I put up with you
how the shrill of your complaining
is like a quiet thoughtful
answer the world gives me
to my non-stop question

and nothing else stops
ever, and the horizon
is a pause in a long sentence
a body is the patience
to hear to the end—

this kind of boat can go through the sea
this kind of boat is quiet fire.

29 February 2012